

flat and the adhesive was allowed to harden." But this is not correct for the reasons stated in the Declaration of John Rupel which is filed herewith.

Japanese patent '378 discloses a method for making a solid honeycomb structure from two strips of paper. The paper is run through a bath of impregnation liquid. The excess liquid is squeezed out by two rolls and an adhesive is applied to the paper sheets. The two sheets are then wound on a wheel. After a desired amount has been wound onto the wheel the paper is cut from the wheel, expanded to open the honeycomb and then placed in a rack shown in Figure 4. The rack that contains the honeycomb is then placed in an oven then the impregnated paper hardens to form a solid honeycomb structure. The Examiner has suggested that it would be obvious to one skilled in the art to use a moisture cure adhesive in this process. If one did that, the adhesive would cure completely while the material is on the wheel. The Japanese reference, at paragraph 0013 of the English translation, teaches that since the raw material is in a wet state, contraction of an adhesive could not create a problem because the paper can move. There is no disclosure in this patent that tubular strips could be used. Indeed, one skilled in the art would know not to use tubular materials because they would stick together being wet on the rack. See Declaration of John Rupel filed herewith.

There are significant differences between the Japanese process and the process disclosed and claimed in the pending application. In the Japanese reference, the honeycomb is cured to form a solid structure, whereas, the method claimed by Applicant is used to make flexible window covering material. The honeycomb material created in the Japanese reference is cut into short sections placed on a curing rack and then put into an oven to solidify the honeycomb. In the claimed method the material can be cut and laid flat to cure on a flat surface. In the claimed method is the flow of the adhesive allows the stack to change shape when placed on a flat

surface. In the process disclosed by the Japanese reference, it is the movement of the wet paper that allows the stack to change shape after being cut from the wheel.

As explained by Mr. Rupel, honeycomb structures of the type disclosed in the Japanese reference are often used to make structural components. For example they may be placed between two flat sheets of plastic or metal and bonded to those sheets to make a building panel. Because of their use in this manner there is no concern about wrinkles or unevenness appearing in the surfaces of the honeycomb in the final product. Window coverings on the other hand are sold because of their appearance as well as their function. It would be unacceptable to have wrinkles in honeycomb material used as a window covering. Therefore, one skilled in the art would not consider using the process disclosed by the Japanese reference to make flexible honeycomb materials, particularly window covering products.

For these reasons the method disclosed and claimed in this application would not have been obvious to one skilled in the art. Accordingly, the claims are patentable over the cited prior art.

Reconsideration and issuance of a notice of allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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